[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2021-0262; Project Identifier AD-2020-00815-T]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 757-200, -200PF, -200CB, and -300 series airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by crack indications found in the lower aft wing skin bolt holes where the flap tracks attach to the track support fitting. This proposed AD would require repetitive high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections for cracking of the lower aft wing skin aft edge at certain flap tracks, and repair if necessary. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

• Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to https://www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

• Fax: 202-493-2251.

• Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

• Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For Boeing service information identified in this NPRM, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminster Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone 562-797-1717; Internet https://www.myboeingfleet.com. For Aviation Partners Boeing service information identified in this NPRM, contact Aviation Partners Boeing, 2811 S. 102nd Street, Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98168; telephone: 206-830-7699; Internet: https://www.aviationpartnersboeing.com. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020, is also available on the Internet at https://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0262.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket at https://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0262; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Truong, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard,

Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5224; fax: 562-627-5210; email: david.truong@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include "Docket No. FAA-2021-0262; Project Identifier AD-2020-00815-T" at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to https://www.regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

Confidential Business Information

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as "PROPIN." The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to David Truong,

Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5224; fax: 562-627-5210; email: david.truong@faa.gov. Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

Background

The FAA has received a report indicating that, during teardown of a 737-300 airplane, crack indications were found in the lower aft wing skin bolt holes where the flap tracks attach to the track support fitting at flap track numbers 1, 2, and 3. A metallurgical lab confirmed there were cracks at flap track numbers 2 and 3. The indication at flap track number 1 was confirmed by a metallurgical lab to have corrosion in the hole of the track support fitting, but no cracking in the skin. This damage is the result of local stresses being higher than expected. The left and right wing, lower aft wing skin pad-up length is insufficient to reduce stress. The crack finding occurred at 67,695 flight cycles and 80,269 flight hours. Model 757 airplanes are of a similar design, with flap track attachment to the wing rear spar through skin overhang and track support fittings, for flap track number 2 (wing buttock line (WBL) 361) and flap track number 7 (WBL 361). Undetected cracking in the lower aft wing skin, if not addressed, could result in the inability of the structure to carry limit load and could adversely affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

FAA's Determination

The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Related Service Information under 1 CFR Part 51

The FAA reviewed Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020, and Aviation Partner Boeing Alert Service Bulletin AP757-57-011, dated August 21, 2020. This service information specifies procedures for repetitive HFEC inspections for cracking of the lower aft wing skin aft edge at flap track numbers 2 and 7 attachment locations, and repair. These documents are distinct since they apply to different airplane models in different configurations.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in ADDRESSES.

Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information already described, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. For information on the procedures and compliance times, see Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020, at https://www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0262.

Explanation of Requirements Bulletin

The FAA worked in conjunction with industry, under the Airworthiness Directive Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee (AD ARC), to enhance the AD system. One enhancement is a process for annotating which steps in the service information are "required for compliance" (RC) with an AD. Boeing has implemented this RC concept into Boeing service bulletins.

In an effort to further improve the quality of ADs and AD-related Boeing service information, a joint process improvement initiative was worked between the FAA and Boeing. The initiative resulted in the development of a new process in which the service

information more clearly identifies the actions needed to address the unsafe condition in the "Accomplishment Instructions." The new process results in a Boeing Requirements Bulletin, which contains only the actions needed to address the unsafe condition (i.e., only the RC actions).

Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this proposed AD affects 483 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

Estimated costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Repetitive inspections	2 work-hours X $85 per hour = $170 per inspection cycle	$0	$170 per inspection cycle	$82,110 per inspection cycle

The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the on-condition repairs specified in this proposed AD.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

(1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(3) Would not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

The Boeing Company: Docket No. FAA-2021-0262; Project Identifier AD-2020-00815-T.

(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 757-200, -200PF, -200CB, and -300 series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by crack indications found in the lower aft wing skin bolt holes where the flap tracks attach to the track support fitting. The FAA is issuing this AD to address undetected cracking in the lower aft wing skin, which could result in the inability of the structure to carry limit load and could adversely affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Required Actions

(1) For all airplanes except those identified in paragraph (g)(2) of this AD: Except as specified by paragraph (h) of this AD, at the applicable times specified in the "Compliance" paragraph of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020, do all applicable actions identified in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020.

Note 1 to paragraph (g): Guidance for accomplishing the actions required by this AD can be found in Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 757-57A0074, dated June 11, 2020, which is referred to in Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020.

(2) For airplanes on which Aviation Partners Boeing blended winglets or scimitar blended winglets are installed using supplemental type certificate (STC) ST01518SE: Except as specified by paragraph (h) of this AD, at the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., "Compliance" of Aviation Partner Boeing Alert Service Bulletin AP757-57-011, dated August 21, 2020, do all applicable actions identified as "RC" (required for compliance) in, and in accordance with, the Accomplishment Instructions of Aviation Partner Boeing Alert Service Bulletin AP757-57-011, dated August 21, 2020.

(h) Exceptions to Service Information Specifications

(1) Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020, uses the phrase "the original issue date of Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB," this AD requires using "the effective date of this AD."

(2) Where Boeing Alert Requirements Bulletin 757-57A0074 RB, dated June 11, 2020, specifies contacting Boeing for repair instructions: This AD requires doing the repair before further flight using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (i) of this AD.

(3) Where Aviation Partner Boeing Alert Service Bulletin AP757-57-011, dated August 21, 2020, uses the phrase "the original issue date of this service bulletin," this AD requires using "the effective date of this AD."

(4) Where Aviation Partner Boeing Alert Service Bulletin AP757-57-011, dated August 21, 2020, specifies contacting Boeing for repair instructions: This AD requires doing the repair before further flight using a method approved in accordance with the

procedures specified in paragraph (i) of this AD.

(i) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Los Angeles ACO Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the certification office, send it to the attention of the person identified in Related Information. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-LAACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(3) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair, modification, or alteration required by this AD if it is approved by The Boeing Company Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Los Angeles ACO Branch, FAA, to make those findings. To be approved, the repair method, modification deviation, or alteration deviation must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(j) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact David Truong, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712-4137; phone: 562-627-5224; fax: 562-627-5210; email: david.truong@faa.gov.

(2) For Boeing service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600

Westminster Blvd., MC 110-SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740-5600; telephone 562-797-1717; Internet https://www.myboeingfleet.com.

(3) For Aviation Partners Boeing service information identified in this AD, contact Aviation Partners Boeing, 2811 S. 102nd Street, Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98168; telephone: 206-830-7699; Internet: https://www.aviationpartnersboeing.com.

(4) You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

Issued on March 30, 2021.

Ross Landes, Deputy Director for Regulatory Operations,
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 2021-07326 Filed: 4/8/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 4/9/2021]